The Scarlet Letter

Chapter One – “The Prison Door”

While you read this short chapter, I’m going to ask that you consider the visual aspect of Hawthorne’s writing, something for which he is famous. You are to take one quotation that you think describes something particularly well and create a 8 ½ x 11 “poster” with the quotation and an image, whether it’s clip-art, a photo you find on the internet, or something your create.

Additionally, here are some questions to guide your thinking and reading.

*Questions:*

1. Why might have Hawthorne described the people the way that he has? I realize that these are probably realistic descriptions of Puritan townsfolk, but he uses specific words and pieces of their affect to introduce us to them. (i.e. sad-colored garments) Spend some time with the first half of the first sentence and attempt to explain his descriptions.

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1. How many different ways can you think of in which the town’s soil actually has a “virgin” quality? What are they? Do you find it odd that Hawthorne lets us know that the Puritans found it necessary to build a cemetery and a prison, but says nothing of a church, town hall, or school? Where do their priorities lie?
2. What is “antique” and what is “new” in this story? Are they merely physical things?

4) What does Ann Hutchinson have to do with this? Since when is she “sainted?”